

-10-

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED:

1. A one-piece connector and hub sub-unit for attachment to the barrel of a sample tube receiver, said sub-unit comprising:

a first end, a second end, and a central portion between said first and second ends, said central portion being adapted for attachment to said barrel such that said second end is located within the barrel

said first end defining a first piercing member terminating in a blunted end,

said second end adapted for receiving a second and separate piercing member,

said sub-unit defining an internal flow path extending between said blunted end and the second end so as to allow for fluid communication between said blunted end and a second piercing member when received by said second end.

2. The sub-unit of Claim 1 further comprising a second piercing member attached to said unit at said second end, said second piercing member comprising comprises a hollow needle.

3. The sub-unit of Claim 1 wherein said unit is molded from a thermoplastic material.

4. The sub-unit of Claim 1 wherein said thermoplastic material comprises polypropylene.

5. The sub-unit of Claim 1 wherein said central portion comprises annular threads for engagement with said barrel.

6. The sub-unit of Claim 2 comprising a flexible sleeve over said needle.

7. The sub-unit of Claim 2 further comprising a pair of caps enclosing said first and second piercing members.

8. A one-piece connector unit for attachment to the barrel of a sample tube receiver, said unit comprising:

a first end, a second end, and a central portion between said first and second ends, said central portion being adapted for attachment to said barrel such that said second end is located within the barrel

said first end defining first piercing member terminating in a blunted end,

said second end defining a second and separate piercing member,

said unit defining an internal flow path extending between said first and second piercing members;

-11-

9. The unit of Claim 8 further comprising:
 - a removable cover enclosing said first piercing member; and
 - a removable cover enclosing said second piercing member.
10. The unit of Claim 9 wherein each of said covers comprises an open and a closed end, wherein said open ends face one another.
11. The unit of Claim 9 wherein said first end comprises a hub including a plurality of radial fins thereon and said removable cover enclosing said first piercing member comprising an inner wall, said inner wall including a plurality of slots for receiving said fins.
12. A sample tube receiver assembly comprising:
 - a barrel having a open proximal end for receiving a sample tube, and a distal end;
 - a one-piece connector unit for attachment at said distal end of said barrel;
 - said unit comprising a first end, a second end, and a central portion between said first and second ends, said central portion being adapted for attachment to said barrel such that said second end is located within the barrel;
 - said first end defining first piercing member,
 - said second end defining a second and separate piercing member,
 - said unit defining an internal flow path extending between said first and second piercing members.
13. The assembly of Claim 12 wherein said first piercing member terminates in a blunted end.